

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00  
MC-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00  
DOTE-00 EB-08 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 PA-01 PRS-01  
ACDA-07 OES-06 NASA-01 /073 W  
-----161603Z 061203 /43

O R 161434Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9014

INFO DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TANANARIVE 0508

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MA, US

SUBJECT: SALE OF HERVULES AIRCRAFT TO MADAGASCAR, AND NASA

REFS: (A) STATE 057075, (B) TANANARIVE 0498

1. THREE MOST RECENT ACTIONS BY RDM WHICH COULD BE INDICATIVE OF STATE OF US-MALAGASY RELATIONS HAVE BEEN: (A) DECISION TO STOP NEGOTIATING FOR HERCULES PURCHASE; (B) TURNAROUND ON ITS PROPOSAL FOR A NASA SETTLEMENT; AND (C) APPARENT UNWILLINGNESS OF ACTING MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO RECEIVE ME. WHILE ALL THREE OF THESE ACTIONS COULD BE INTERPRETED, EITHER JOINTLY OR SEPARATELY, AS INDICATING A RENEWED GET-TOUGH STANCE TOWARD THE US, EACH OF THEM CAN ALSO BE EXPLAINED OTHERWISE. THE DECISION ON HERCULES COULD WELL BE DUE TO FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS, AS STATED REFTTEL, AND THE DELAY IN MY OFFICIAL CALLS TO THE REASONS GIVEN. WHILE NO RATIONALE WAS ADVANCED FOR THE RDM'S TURNAROUND ON NASA, IT MAY ALSO BE DUE TO TACTICAL OR INTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS AND NOT REFLECT DELIBERATE DECISION MADE FOR EXTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS.

2. I ADMIT THE POSSIBILITY CITED REF A THAT RDM, HAVING SEEN THAT OCTOBER THAW HAD NOT ATTAINED ITS IMMEDIATE  
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OBJECTIVES OF EARLY SALE OR GIFT OF HERCULES, AS SUGGESTED BY SOLOFOSON, HAS NOW DECIDED TO REVERT TO PREVIOUS HARD LINE. IN ATTEMPT TO GET MORE BACKGROUND ON REASON FOR HERCULES DECISION, I ASKED DATT TO PROBE FURTHER DURING A CALL ON SEC-GEN MINDEF LT. COL. RASOLOMALALA, SET UP FOR PURPOSE OF CLEARING MESSAGE TO LOCKHEED (REF B). ALTHOUGH PLEADING INCOMPLETE KNOWLEDGE, RASOLOMALALA'S REPLIES WERE

REVEALING. HE STATED, INTER ALIA, THAT (A) INSTRUCTION TO DROP NEGOTIATIONS WAS CONVEYED TO HIM WITHOUT EXPLANATION FOLLOWING CABINET MEETING; (B) HERCULES AIRCRAFT WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE CONSIDERED FURTHER; AND (C) HE DID NOT KNOW IF FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONTROLLING.

3. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT HESITATION ON HERCULES PURCHASE BEGAN WELL BEFORE THIS MARCH 8 NOTIFICATION, AS EVINCED BY LOCKHEED INABILITY TO SEE NORMAL RDM CONTACTS IN JANUARY AND BY MINISTER OF FINANCE'S OPPOSITION AS REPORTED TO US BY RASOLOMALALA HIMSELF. FURTHERMORE, INFORMATION RECENTLY PICKED UP BY DATT, REPORTED TO DIA (IR 6 860 0010 77), INDICATES THAT OTHER FACTORS COULD HAVE LESSENED DESIRABILITY OF PROCEEDING WITH LOCKHEED SALE.

4. BASED ON THIS FRAGMENTARY INFORMATION AND WHATEVER THE REAL REASON FOR THE ABANDONMENT OF HERCULES, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT COMING FORTH AT THIS TIME WITH ASSURANCES REGARDING AVAILABILITY OF EXPORT LICENSE WOULD INDUCE RDM TO RENEW NEGOTIATIONS FOR HERCULES. IF PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE CONTROLLING, THEY WOULD REMAIN SO, REGARDLESS OF EXPORT LICENSE AVAILABILITY. IF REASON WAS RESENTMENT AT USG INTERFERENCE IN SALE AND A CONSEQUENT DESIRE TO SPITE US, THEN A REVERSAL OF OUR POSITION ON THE EXPORT LICENSE WOULD SIMPLY MAKE IT ALL THE SWEETER FOR THE RDM TO CONFIRM ITS ABANDONMENT OF THE HERCULES.

5. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND AGAINST OUR TAKING ANY INITIATIVE  
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ON THIS MATTER. SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT, FOR ITS OWN REASONS, DETERMINE THAT AN EXPORT LICENSE SHOULD BE APPROVED, I RECOMMEND THAT LOCKHEED BE SO INFORMED AND THAT IT TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONVEYING THIS DECISION TO THE RDM, EITHER HERE OR IN WASHINGTON. WE COULD THEN CONFIRM IF ASKED.

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-----161603Z 061461 /42

O R 161434Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9015

INFO DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TANANARIVE 0508

6. I WILL TRY TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT RDM STANCE ON NASA AND HERCULES WHEN I CALL ON MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ON SOLOFOSON, HOPEFULLY NEXT WEEK. I SEE NO PURPOSE IN RAISING WITH SUBORDINATE OFFICIALS MATTERS THAT HAVE BEEN HANDLED ON SUCH AN OBVIOUSLY HIGH LEVEL. SEPTTEL GIVES PRESENT STATUS MY CALLS.

7. IN ABSENCE OF ANY HIGH LEVEL CONTACTS WITH RDM, I CAN ONLY BASE ANY FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF STATE OF US-MALAGASY RELATIONS ON MY CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER DIPLOMATS HERE. GENERAL CONSENSUS HAS BEEN THAT RATSIRAKA PRIMARILY MOTIVATED BY DESIRE TO CHANGE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF COUNTRY AND TO DEVELOP THE ECONOMY. HE REALIZES THAT WESTERN AND US ASSISTANCE WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN LATTER ENDEAVOR AND HE DOES NOT WANT TO BECOME TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON SOVIET BLOC. MOST OF THE NON-COMMUNIST CHIEFS OF MISSION I CALLED ON SUGGESTED THAT US SHOULD DISREGARD HOSTILE RDM RHETORIC AND BE UNDERSTANDING OF RATSIRAKA AND COOPERATIVE SO THAT HE WOULD NOT BE FORCED TO RELY SOLELY ON COMMUNIST ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR, ONLY HERE ONE MONTH, COMPARES RATSIRAKA'S POSITION TO EARLY DAYS OF NASSER WHEN WESTERN FAILURE TO HELP HIM LED HIM TO THE EAST. FRENCH CONFIDENTIAL

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AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT RATSIRAKA IS NOT ALL THAT INTERESTED IN BEING A THIRD WORLD LEADER; NEITHER HE NOR PRIME MINISTER ATTENDED RECENT ARAB-AFRICAN SUMMIT IN CAIRO. COMMUNIST AMBASSADORS DESCRIBE RDM OFFICIALS WITH FOND CONDESCENSION AS BOURGEOIS MOUTHING REVOLUTIONARY SLOGANS IN ORDER TO ATTRACT SUPPORT OF POPULATION.

8. EVEN IF THIS TOLERANT WESTERN CONSENSUS ON RATSIRAKA'S INTENTIONS IS ACCEPTED, IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY FOLLOW THAT US SHOULD ACCEDE TO ALL RDM WISHES AND IGNORE ITS PROVOCATIONS. I HAVE POINTED OUT, AS APPROPRIATE, TO SOME CHIEFS OF MISSION HERE THAT IDEOLOGY AND RHETORIC HAD LITTLE TO DO WITH OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE RDM, WHICH

HAVE BEEN PRIMARILY BILATERAL IN NATURE AND WOULD HAVE CAUSED US TO REACT EVEN WITH OUR MOST CAPITALISTIC ALLIES. I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT, AS STATED IN POST-SHEINBAUM LETTER OF JAN 14, WE SHOULD MAKE IT EVIDENT TO RDM AND TO SPECTATOR GOVERNMENTS THAT OUR REACTION TO RDM PROVOCATIONS DECIDED UPON LAST YEAR WAS NOT TAKEN HASTILY ON IMPULSE AND THAT IT WOULD NOT BE LIGHTLY REVERSED. TOO QUICK A REACTION ON OUR PART TO RDM ACTIONS, SUCH AS LAST OCTOBER'S FORTHCOMINGNESS ON NASA OR RECENT UNFAVORABLE DECISION ON HERCULES, WOULD BE INCONSISTENT WITH THIS POSTURE. IT COULD ALSO ENGENDER SOME CONTEMPT ON PART OF RDM, THEREBY ADVERSELY AFFECTING CHANCES OF EVENTUALLY ESTABLISHING ACCEPTABLE RELATIONSHIP. A TOO QUICK AND OBVIOUS CHANGE IN OUR STAND ON EXPORT LICENSE WOULD BE SUCH AN UNDESIRABLE ACTION, AND I THEREFORE OPPOSE IT NOT ONLY FOR THE PRACTICAL REASONS SET FORTH IN PARA 4, BUT ALSO FOR LONG-TERM STRATEGIC REASONS. IF IT MUST BE DONE, THEN LET LOCKHEED CARRY THE BALL ALONE.

9. I WILL BE ADDING TO THIS ASSESSMENT AS MY CONTACTS HERE INCREASE AND IN THE COURSE OF PREPARING THE PARM DUE IN THE DEPT ON MARCH 31. BARRETT  
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## Message Attributes

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